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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An Internet audio appliance which receives audio content from a content provider via the Internet. In one embodiment, the Internet audio appliance plays the audio information data stream as it is received. In another embodiment, the audio information data stream is obtained at a convenient time, e.g., in the middle of the night, and stored in audio memory for later playback. A channel selector module allows a user to select from among a plurality of possible audio information sources available from various content providers on the Internet. In one embodiment, the channel selector module includes memory to store Internet access information (e.g., a phone number of an Internet service provider) and IP address information to identify the selected content provider. Based on the channel selected in the channel selector module, the Internet audio appliance automatically dials the IP server or other Internet access port, and requests from the selected content provider an audio information data stream corresponding to a desired subject, language, or other information. Channel memory locations may store any information necessary to access a content provider on the Internet, e.g., the telephone number of the Internet access port and/or an IP address of the selected content provider. In yet another embodiment, the Internet audio appliance includes a voice messaging system such as a telephone answering device (TAD). The TAD/Internet audio appliance accesses information when not in use. A central office may provide the desired Internet information to the TAD/Internet audio appliance or other telephone device so long as no incoming call requires use of the telephone line from the central office to the TAD/Internet audio appliance.

**16 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets**

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